

and impoverished lands from Central America to Africa and the Middle East to document the suffering of people caught in the middle of global conflicts. She has protested the United States' involvement in some of these conflicts, not fearing arrest because she was advocating for what she believed was a greater cause. These selfless acts are an inspiration to anyone who wishes justice not just for their countrymen, but for all the people of the world.

Throughout her travels, Ruth wrote about the places and people she visited, but it was not until the early 1990s that she made a career of her love of writing. Inspired by stories from the members of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, Ruth began publishing her work in *La Gazette* as a monthly columnist. It was these women's stories that also became the basis for her book, *What a Life: Heroines Sung and Unsung*.

Ruth's passion for her work stems from the fun she has while doing good deeds. I know her personally as my Cuban dancing partner, and her friends warmly refer to her as the Queen of Mojitos! And through her good spirit and love for humanity, she continues to amaze us all by choosing to stand up and fight when so many people are content to sit down.

Mr. Speaker, Ruth Hunter continues her work in activism and writing, even on her eighty-seventh birthday, and I wish to take this opportunity to honor her and to congratulate her for being an inspiration to us all.

TRIBUTE TO BILL BUTLER

HON. JAMES T. WALSH

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2003

Mr. WALSH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a great man from Ontario, NY, a small town from the new area of my district. This closely-knit community in the northeast corner of Wayne County recently lost a first-class citizen, Bill Butler.

Mr. Butler was a longtime resident of Ontario, always working to better the community he loved. His benevolence was most exemplified through the Ontario-Walworth Rotary Club. With over 30 years of perfect attendance, Bill served as the club President, District Governor representing some 68 Rotary clubs and President Representative of Rotary International. These efforts took him throughout the Ontario-Walworth community and the world.

Inspired by the drive to further promote international humanity, Bill's most recent trip took him to a Rotary conference in Brisbane, Australia. Unfortunately this proved to be his last goodwill effort. On the ride to the airport, for his return trip home, the car Bill was traveling in was involved in a fatal accident where Bill's life was lost. He was 69 years of age.

Mr. Speaker, Bill's life will not be forgotten, as he touched the lives of many people. Endlessly volunteering and constantly willing to lend a hand, his big smile always left you with a warm feeling.

It is my honor to recognize Mr. Bill Butler. We owe him a huge debt of gratitude for all he has done. I extend my heartfelt sympathies to his family and friends, including his wife Christine, his children Patricia, James, George, Deborah and David and seven grand-

children. Bill Butler was a loving family man and an honorable Rotarian.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. PORTER J. GOSS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2003

Mr. GOSS. Mr. Speaker, I was not present on July 9, 2003, due to official travel overseas. As a result, I was not able to be present for rollcall votes 337, 338, 339, 340, 341, 342, 343, 344 and 345. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on all nine votes. I request that this statement appear at the appropriate place in the RECORD.

HONORING THE MICHIGAN MILITARY MOMS

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2003

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise to acknowledge and celebrate the Michigan Military Moms for their insatiable support and encouragement for all of the men and women from Michigan that serve their country both in times of war and peace. These women have proved to possess incredible strength under exceptionally harrowing circumstances.

Since Michigan lacks many of the organized support networks available near large military bases, the mothers of Michigan's men and women in uniform found themselves alone, lacking an outlet to express their pain, frustration, and fear.

On July 18, 2002, a small group of eight mothers, united by pride and dedicated to their sons and daughters serving in the Armed Services, joined together in a local Big Boy restaurant. Less than one year later that small group now consists of more than 175 members. The group, which celebrates the heroic effort of our men and women in uniform, offers support and encouragement for mothers and their children serving in all five branches of the Armed Services.

During its first year, Michigan Military Moms quickly implemented several successful programs. Notably, the group has formed partnerships with local schools, churches, businesses, and interested individuals to send monthly support packages to soldiers serving worldwide. Furthermore, the group organized "Mentor a Mom," a program to couple experienced military moms with mothers whose children are going through basic military training. They also created a support group for local recruiters, and initiated a card campaign where mothers sent birthday greetings to service men and women.

The strength and patriotism of this amazing group of women should be applauded. Mr. Speaker, I would ask that all my colleagues rise and join me in commending the Michigan Military Moms for their inexhaustible support, unity, and leadership to their community and their country and wishing them and their families continued strength as they go through this difficult time.

SUPPORTING THE CONTINENT OF AFRICA

HON. DANNY K. DAVIS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 10, 2003

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, recent events call our attention to the continent of Africa. The people of Africa are suffering and in pain. Africa is a continent which contains immense natural resources and is populated by people that are of diverse rich cultures. And yet, they are dying from the rampant spread of the HIV/AIDS virus. Civil war has wounded them and put their lives in chaos. The lives of their children are plagued by drought, famine and diseases.

Mr. Speaker, in 2001, the HIV/AIDS virus infected approximately 3.5 million Africans, an estimated 2.2 million Africans died due to the virus and approximately 11 million African children were orphaned because they lost their parents to the virus. It is predicted that many more Africans will be infected and die due to the virus if something is not done quickly to help Africans with prevention, treatment and health care programs. We have begun the task of aiding Africa in combating this virus, with the \$15 billion HIV/AIDS package the President recently signed into law on May 27, 2003.

But more needs to be done. If Africans do not die due to the HIV/AIDS virus, they may die due to civil wars that plague many African countries today. In the country of Liberia, the people have endured and suffered bloody civil war and unrest for the past 13 years. Liberians have been killed in horrendous numbers because of this war. In one day in June of this year, over 300 civilians were killed and over 1000 were injured. This war is destroying the future of many Liberian children who are forced to become brutal soldiers at such young ages. Civilians have been executed, tortured and raped. Half of the population escaped to refugee camps in neighboring countries, where due to overcrowding, food, water and health provisions are limited. This has placed tremendous burdens on Liberia's caring neighbors.

We as a nation must assist the people of Liberia. We must help them to reverse the deterioration of their country. But we should not do this alone. France, Germany, Great Britain and Belgium have worked together with the United Nations to send troops to help with peacekeeping efforts in the conflict in Africa's Republic of Congo. By joining efforts with the United Nations, we can provide even more support and make it easier for the country of Liberia to rebuild itself into a strong, stable and lasting governmental infrastructure, knowing that all nations are behind them. By having the involvement of other countries, working together to contribute to the peacekeeping effort in Liberia, will prevent our troops from being overextended.

Mr. Speaker, we have done a lot to help Africa to grow, as many of its nations are reborn from various political, economical and social adversities. But it is not enough; we need to do more to help countries in the continent of Africa with peacekeeping solutions. Having a steady government is a good foundation. It is needed to help establish and to manage international support and reconstruction programs,